OPTICAL SENSOR

Patent number:

JP2000227359

Publication date:

2000-08-15

Inventor:

AOYANAGI KENICHI; HONDA TADAHIRO; NAKAO

HITOSHI

Applicant:

TOTO LTD

Classification:

- international:

E03C1/05; G01J1/02; E03C1/05; G01J1/02; (IPC1-7):

G01J1/02; E03C1/05

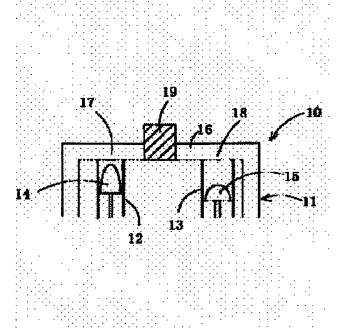
- european:

Application number: JP19990027892 19990204 Priority number(s): JP19990027892 19990204

Report a data error here

Abstract of JP2000227359

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To obtain an optical sensor which does not malfunction even when water drops or the like adhere to a front cover thereof by shielding a passage of light causing the malfunction. SOLUTION: A reflecting type optical sensor 10 has a pair of a light- projecting element 14 and a lightreceiving element 15 set side by side in a case 11 equipped with a front cover 16 of a lightpermeable substance at the front side. In this case, a light-shielding part 19 is set between a light-projecting part 17 of the front cover 16 where the light from the light-projecting element 14 passes and a light-receiving part 18 of the front cover 16 where the light passes to the light-receiving element 15. The lightshielding part projects in a detect direction from a front face of the front cover 16



Data supplied from the esp@cenet database - Worldwide

PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN

(11)Publication number:

2000-227359

(43) Date of publication of application: 15.08.2000

(51)Int.Cl.

G01J 1/02

E03C 1/05

(21)Application number: 11-027892

(71)Applicant: TOTO LTD

(22)Date of filing:

04.02.1999

(72)Inventor: AOYANAGI KENICHI

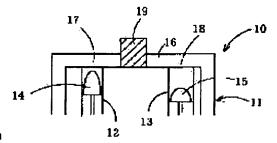
HONDA TADAHIRO NAKAO HITOSHI

(54) OPTICAL SENSOR

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To obtain an optical sensor which does not malfunction even when water drops or the like adhere to a front cover thereof by shielding a passage of light causing the malfunction.

SOLUTION: A reflecting type optical sensor 10 has a pair of a light-projecting element 14 and a light-receiving element 15 set side by side in a case 11 equipped with a front cover 16 of a light-permeable substance at the front side. In this case, a light-shielding part 19 is set between a light-projecting part 17 of the front cover 16 where the light from the light-projecting element 14 passes and a light-receiving part 18 of the front cover 16 where the light passes to the light-receiving element 15. The light-shielding part projects in a detect direction from a front face of the front cover 16.



LEGAL STATUS

[Date of request for examination]

[Date of sending the examiner's decision of rejection]

[Kind of final disposal of application other than the examiner's decision of rejection or application converted registration]

[Date of final disposal for application]

[Patent number]

[Date of registration]

[Number of appeal against examiner's decision of rejection]

[Date of requesting appeal against examiner's decision of rejection]

[Date of extinction of right]

* NOTICES *

JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1] The photosensor characterized by to have the protection-from-light section which made it project in the detection direction from the front face of this front covering between the floodlighting section of said table covering which the light from said floodlighting component passes, and the light sensing portion of said table covering which the light to said photo detector passes in the photosensor of the reflective mold which installed in the case equipped with front covering which is from the light-transmission nature matter on a before side about the floodlighting component used as a pair, and a photo detector.

[Claim 2] It is the photosensor characterized by for said protection-from-light section making said table covering between said floodlighting sections and light sensing portions project in the floodlighting direction, embedding the protection-from-light nature matter to the interior in a photosensor according to claim 1, and being constituted.

[Claim 3] It is the photosensor characterized by the floodlighting direction making said table covering between said floodlighting sections and light sensing portions project to hard flow, and said protection-from-light section forming a hollow, embedding the protection-from-light nature matter in this hollow, fixing in a photosensor according to claim 1, and being constituted.

[Claim 4] It is the photosensor characterized by consisting of low protection-from-light nature matter of a reflection factor with which said protection-from-light section was stuck between said floodlighting sections and light sensing portions in the photosensor according to claim 1.

[Claim 5] It is the photosensor characterized by for said protection-from-light nature matter serving as tabular in a photosensor according to claim 4, and the cross-section include angle by the side of said floodlighting section and a light sensing portion serving as an acute angle.

[Claim 6] The photosensor characterized by to prepare the protection-from-light section which consists of low protection-from-light nature matter of the reflection factor equipped with the both sides of the light-transmission hole which the light irradiated from said floodlighting component passes in the photosensor of the reflective mold which installed in the case equipped with front covering which is from the light-transmission nature matter on a before side about the floodlighting component used as a pair , and a photo detector , and the light-transmission hole which the incident light to said photo detector passes in the front face of said table covering .

[Claim 7] The photosensor characterized at the floodlighting section of said table covering which the light from said floodlighting component passes by to prepare the protection-from-light section which consists of low protection-from-light nature matter of the reflection factor equipped with the light-transmission hole only in the light sensing portion of a chisel or said table covering which the light to said photo detector passes in the photosensor of the reflective mold which installed in the case equipped with front covering which is from the light-transmission nature matter on a before side about the floodlighting component used as a pair, and a photo detector.

[Claim 8] It is the photosensor characterized by the thing large more slightly than the path of said floodlighting component to which the path of said light transmission hole corresponds in a photosensor according to claim 6 or 7, respectively, or a photo detector.

[Translation done.]

* NOTICES *

JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention] [0001]

[Field of the Invention] This invention relates to the photosensor which cannot produce malfunction easily, even when the photosensor used for the automatic cock used in a kitchen, a washroom, etc. is started and waterdrop etc. adheres especially.
[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art] When a hand is held up to what [what detects and carries out the discharged water of the hand which the photosensor of a reflective mold was prepared in the point section of a spout, and was held out to this photosensor in the conventional automatic cock], for example, this photosensor, discharged water is carried out, and what cuts off water when a hand is held up again is used. Although the outline structure of this photosensor 60 is shown in drawing 10 - drawing 13, the floodlighting component 63 and photo detector 64 within the case 62 equipped with the front covering 61 with which a transverse plane consists of light transmission nature matter were turned towards the front covering 61, and have been arranged, and in order to prevent that the light from the floodlighting component 63 spreads directly to a photo detector 64, it arranges in the tube-like object 65 which becomes either or the both sides of the floodlighting component 63 and a photo detector 64 from the protection-from-light nature matter. Moreover, the sensor installation structure of the automatic cock which equipped with the photosensor of a reflective mold the interior of the spout case where it has water flow tubing inside is proposed by JP,8-93015,A. In this sensor installation structure, the floodlighting component and photo detector which turned the predetermined direction and have been arranged were contained to the tubed part, and while preventing that arrange a black double-sided tape to the package and rear-face side of surface covering by black foam, and light carries out ON light of the perimeter of this tubed part to a direct photo detector from a floodlighting component, the reflected light from front covering is prevented. [0003]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] However, as shown in drawing 10 and drawing 11, when waterdrop 69 and 70 adhered to the inside part of each of the floodlighting section 67 of the front face of the front covering 61, and a light sensing portion 68, there was a case where a photosensor 60 malfunctioned. That is, in drawing 11 (A), after reflecting in the adhesion side of waterdrop 69 where the light from the floodlighting component 63 adhered to the front covering 61, two or more rotatory inversion putting and after reflecting in respect of adhesion of waterdrop 70 further, about the inside of the front covering 61, the photo detector 64 was reached and the photosensor 60 had become ON. Moreover, in drawing 11 (B), after passing the floodlighting section 67, it entered in waterdrop 69, the reflected light reached waterdrop 70, it reflected in the specific direction within waterdrop 70 again, ON light of the light from the floodlighting component 63 was carried out to the photo detector 64, and the photosensor 60 had become ON. moreover, the light which reflected multiply the adhesion side and the front covering 61 of waterdrop 72 as shown in drawing 13 (A) when the big waterdrop 72 which straddles the floodlighting section 67 and a light sensing portion 68 adhered, as shown in drawing 12 and drawing 13 -- or as shown in drawing 13 (B), there was a case where a photosensor 60 malfunctioned by the light which passes through the inside of waterdrop 72. Furthermore, also in the sensor installation structure of an automatic cock given in JP,8-93015,A, when waterdrop as shown in drawing 11 and drawing 13 adhered to the front face of front covering, the light from a floodlighting component got across to the photo detector, and there was a problem that malfunction could not be prevented. This invention intercepts the path of the light which malfunction generates even if it was made in view of this situation and waterdrop etc. adheres to front covering of a photosensor, and aims at offering the photosensor which malfunction does not produce.

[0004]

[Means for Solving the Problem] The photosensor concerning the 1st invention in alignment with said purpose In the photosensor of the reflective mold installed in the case equipped with front covering which is from the light transmission nature matter on a before side about the floodlighting component used as a pair, and a photo detector It has the protection-from-light section which made it project in the detection direction from the front face of this front covering between the floodlighting section of said table covering which the light from said floodlighting component passes, and the light sensing portion of said table covering which the light to said photo detector passes. By this, even if waterdrop adheres to front covering, the light which passes the waterdrop adhering to the light which passes through the inside of front covering, and front covering will be intercepted by the protection-from-light section, and will not reach a photo detector. What is constituted by making said table covering between said floodlighting sections and light sensing portions project in the floodlighting direction, and embedding the protection-from-light nature matter to the interior as said protection-from-light section here, for example, The floodlighting direction makes said table covering between said floodlighting sections and light sensing portions project to hard flow, a hollow is formed, and there are what embeds the protection-from-light nature matter in this hollow, and is constituted by fixing, and a thing which consists of low protection-from-light nature matter of a reflection factor stuck between said floodlighting sections and light sensing portions, in addition, when it considers as the low protection-from-light nature matter of the reflection factor on which the protection-from-light section was stuck between the floodlighting section and a light sensing portion Making tabular this protection-from-light nature matter, this tabular protection-from-light nature matter has further the advantage that it is desirable to adopt that the cross-section include angle by the side of the floodlighting section and a light sensing portion serves as an acute angle, and dust etc. cannot collect easily between the tabular protection-from-light nature matter and front covering due to this.

[0005] Moreover, the photosensor concerning the 2nd invention in alignment with said purpose In the photosensor of the reflective mold installed in the case equipped with front covering which is from the light transmission nature matter on a before side about the floodlighting component used as a pair, and a photo detector The protection-from-light section which consists of low protection-from-light nature matter of the reflection factor equipped with the both sides of the light transmission hole which the light irradiated from said floodlighting component passes, and the light transmission hole which the incident light to said photo detector passes is prepared in the front face of said table covering. And the photosensor concerning the 3rd invention in alignment with said purpose In the photosensor of the reflective mold installed in the case equipped with front covering which is from the light transmission nature matter on a before side about the floodlighting component used as a pair, and a photo detector the location which coincides with the floodlighting section of said table covering which the light from said floodlighting component passes -- or the protection-from-light section which consists of low protection-from-light nature matter of the reflection factor equipped with the light transmission hole is prepared only in the location which coincides with the light sensing portion of said table covering which the light to said photo detector passes. In the 2nd and 3rd invention, while having shielded in the protection-from-light section which consists of protection-from-light nature matter so that the light from the floodlighting section may not go in the direction of a light sensing portion through waterdrop, the low protection-from-light section of a reflection factor was stuck on front covering, and the light which reflects the floodlighting circles of front covering is prevented. In addition, the path of said light transmission hole can be prevented from spoiling the function of a photosensor in the photosensor concerning the 2nd and 3rd invention by enlarging slightly from the path of said corresponding floodlighting component or a photo detector, respectively.

[Embodiment of the Invention] Then, referring to the attached drawing, it explains per gestalt of the operation which materialized this invention, and an understanding of this invention is presented. The fragmentary sectional view of the photosensor which <u>drawing 1</u> requires for the gestalt of operation of the 1st of this invention here, The fragmentary sectional view of the photosensor which <u>drawing 2</u> requires for the gestalt of operation of the 2nd of this invention, the fragmentary sectional view of the photosensor which <u>drawing 3</u> requires for the gestalt of operation of the 3rd of this invention, The explanatory view of the photosensor which <u>drawing 4</u> (A) and (B) require for the gestalt of operation of the 4th of this invention, The explanatory view of the modification of the photosensor which <u>drawing 5</u> (A) and (B) require for the gestalt of the 4th operation, This explanatory view, <u>drawing 7</u> (A), and (B of <u>drawing 6</u> (A) and (B)) are [the explanatory view of the photosensor which the explanatory view of the further modification of the photosensor concerning the gestalt of operation of the 4th of this invention, <u>drawing 8</u> (A), and (B) require

for the gestalt of operation of the 5th of this invention, and <u>drawing 9</u>] top views in which (A) - (C) shows the modification.

[0007] As shown in drawing 1, in the case 11 made of the synthetic resin which consists of light transmission nature matter, the tubed parts 12 and 13 which consist of protection-from-light nature matter are arranged, the floodlighting component 14 and photo detector 15 which serve as a pair in this tubed part 12 and 13, respectively turn to front, and the photosensor 10 concerning the gestalt of operation of the 1st of this invention is arranged. And a before [a case 11] side serves as the front covering 16 which consists of light transmission nature matter, the floodlighting section 17 is formed in the front face of the floodlighting component 14, and the light sensing portion 18 is formed in the front face of a photo detector 15. The protection-from-light section 19 is formed in the middle of the floodlighting section 17 and a light sensing portion 18. It consisted of opaque synthetic resin (depending on the case, they are a metal, a ceramic, etc.) which is the protection-from-light nature matter, the base was embedded in the front covering 16, and this protection-from-light section 19 has projected that upper limit 2-3mm in the detection direction from the front face of the front covering 16. The breadth (die length which intersects perpendicularly with the space of the protection-from-light section 19 in drawing 1) of this protection-from-light section 19 may be the same as that of the breadth of the front covering 16, and may be somewhat shorter than the breadth of the front covering 16 by the case. In addition, the substrate which is not illustrated is formed in the floodlighting component 14 and a photo detector 15, it connects with each lead wire, and the well-known electrical circuit is formed.

[0008] In the photosensor 10 used as such a configuration, even if waterdrop adheres to the front face of the front covering 16, the light which reflects in the light which carries out ON light, and which is reflected in waterdrop, and adhering waterdrop, and carries out multiple-times reflection of the inside of the front covering 16 will be intercepted by the protection-from-light section 19, will not reach a photo detector 15, and can prevent malfunction by waterdrop as a result.

[0009] Then, although the photosensor 21 concerning the gestalt of operation of the 2nd of this invention shown in drawing 2 is explained, about the same component as the photosensor 10 concerning the gestalt of the 1st operation, the same sign is attached and the detailed explanation is omitted (also setting in the gestalt of subsequent operations the same). In this photosensor 21, the central part of the front covering 22 of a case 11 arranges the protection-from-light nature matter 23 into a projection and the quirk hollow part of that inside in the floodlighting direction, and the protection-from-light section 24 is formed. In addition, the height of the protection-from-light nature matter 23 is height of 2-3mm from the front face of the floodlighting section 17 of the front covering 22, and a light sensing portion 18. By this, even if waterdrop adheres to the front covering 22, the light from the floodlighting component 14 will carry out multiple-times reflection of the inside of adhering waterdrop or the front covering 22, and will not reach a photo detector 15. In the gestalt of this operation, since the protection-from-light nature matter 23 is protected by the front covering 22, it has the advantage that selection of the ingredient of the protection-from-light nature matter 23 becomes larger.

[0010] Although the photosensor 26 concerning the gestalt of operation of the 3rd of this invention is shown in drawing 3, the central part of the front covering 27 is made to project to hard flow with the floodlighting direction, as shown in drawing, the quirk hollow 28 is formed in a front-face side, this quirk hollow 28 is equipped with the tabular protection-from-light nature matter 29, and the protection-from-light section 30 is formed. The height of this protection-from-light nature matter 29 is also height of 2-3mm from the height of the front covering 27. Even if waterdrop adheres to the front covering 27 also in a photosensor 26 by such configuration, the light which carries out ON light to a photo detector 15 through waterdrop from the floodlighting component 14 can be prevented.

[0011] Although the photosensor 32 concerning the gestalt of operation of the 4th of this invention is shown in <u>drawing 4</u>, in a photosensor 32, it is the front face of the front covering 33 used as a plane, and the protection-from-light section 34 which turns into the floodlighting section 17 and a light sensing portion 18 from the low protection-from-light nature matter of a reflection factor in between is stuck. Here, the synthetic resin which mixed the black pigment with the low protection-from-light nature matter of a reflection factor has the synthetic resin which applied rubber and a black coating, a metal, a ceramic, etc., and the height has become about 2-3mm from the front face of the front covering 33. As for the both ends of the protection-from-light section 34, the hemicycle-like notches 35 and 36 are formed according to the configuration of the floodlighting section 17 and a light sensing portion 18. Even if waterdrop adheres to the front face of the front covering 33, or the front face of the protection-from-light section 34, the light which passes waterdrop is shaded in the protection-from-light section 34 by the photosensor 32 of such a

configuration. The light which reflects the interior of the front covering 33 and is going to carry out ON light to a photo detector 15 from the floodlighting component 14 on the other hand is absorbed with the low protection-from-light nature matter of a reflection factor currently stuck on the front face of the front covering 33. Here, although all of the light which reflects the interior of the front covering 33 cannot be intercepted, since the light which reaches a photo detector 15 from the floodlighting component 14 is decreased remarkably, it can perform easily considering as the condition of not detecting by adjusting the sensibility (namely, threshold) of a photo detector 14.

[0012] Although the modification of this photosensor 32 is shown in drawing 5 and drawing 6, slant faces 37 and 38 are formed, respectively in the notches 35 and 36 of the shape of a semicircle currently formed in the both ends of the protection-from-light section 34 so that that cross-section include angle may become an acute angle (the gestalt of this operation about 45 degrees). A part for the joint of the front covering 33 and the protection-from-light section 34 is smoothed, and even if it prevents and adheres, it enables it to remove easily that dust, dirt, etc. adhere to a part for the joint by this. In addition, the front covering 33 prepared in the front face of a case 11 is indicated somewhat smaller than the front-face side of a case 11 by the modification shown in drawing 6. In addition, as for the cross-section include angle of a slant face, selecting in 20 - 70 degrees is desirable, and it is hard coming to secure the thickness of the protection-from-light section 34, and in being larger than 70 degrees, dust becomes easy to adhere, when a cross-section include angle is smaller than 20 degrees.

[0013] Although the further modification of a photosensor 32 is shown in <u>drawing 7</u>, in <u>drawing 7</u> (A), the example which inclined toward the floodlighting section 17 side the example which inclined toward the light sensing portion 18 side, and stuck the protection-from-light section 40 in <u>drawing 7</u> (B), and stuck the protection-from-light section 41 is shown. In addition, the quality of the material and thickness of the protection-from-light sections 40 and 41 are the same as that of said protection-from-light section 34. When waterdrop adheres to the front face of the front covering 33 also in this case, the light which leaks through waterdrop can be interrupted in the protection-from-light sections 40 and 41. On the other hand, although the light which passes through the inside of the front covering 33 will increase a little, since it is minute, it is solvable by performing sensitivity settling of a photo detector 15.

[0014] Although the photosensor 43 concerning the gestalt of operation of the 5th of this invention is shown in drawing 8 (A) and (B), the tabular protection-from-light section 46 equipped with the light transmission hole 44 which doubles an axial center and coincides with the floodlighting section 17, and the light transmission hole 45 which doubles an axial center and coincides with a light sensing portion 18 is stuck on the front face of the front covering 33. The quality of the material of this protection-from-light section 46 consists of low protection-from-light nature matter (for example, synthetic resin, a rubber plate, etc. which mixed the black pigment) of a reflection factor like said protection-from-light section 34. In addition, correctly, the bore of the light transmission hole 45 also becomes large a little with about about 1.1 to 1.5 times of the outer diameter of a photo detector 15, and the bore of the light transmission hole 44 bars the light which carries out incidence to a photo detector 15 while barring the visual field of the light which becomes large a little with about about 1.1 to 1.5 times of the diameter of the floodlighting component 14, and is emitted from the floodlighting component 14.

[0015] The light which it is lost that the light of the floodlighting component 14 carries out ON light to a photo detector 15 through waterdrop, carries out plural reflection of the inside of the front covering 33 further, and reaches a photo detector 15 by this even if waterdrop adheres to the front face of the front covering 33 or the protection-from-light section 46 is also decreased remarkably. By this, malfunction by the waterdrop of a photosensor 43 etc. can be prevented as much as possible. Although drawing 9 (A), (B), and (C) show the modification of this photosensor 43 The example which divided the low protection-from-light nature matter of a reflection factor into two at the floodlighting section and light sensing portion side, and made it the protection-from-light sections 47 and 48 in drawing 9 (A) is set to drawing 9 (B). The example which has arranged the protection-from-light section 50 which consists of low protection-from-light nature matter of a reflection factor the example which has arranged the protection-from-light section 49 which consists of low protection-from-light nature matter of a reflection factor only to the floodlighting section side in drawing 9 (C) only to the light sensing portion side is shown. In any case, the light from the floodlighting component 14 to a photo detector 15 can be prevented by these protection-from-light sections 47-50 by waterdrop adhesion.

[0016] As mentioned above, although the case where this invention was applied to the gestalt of two or more operations was explained, this invention is not limited to the gestalt of said operation. For example, in the gestalt of operation, in order to prevent direct interference with a floodlighting component and a photo

detector in a case, it contained to the tubed part which consists of protection-from-light nature matter, respectively, but a floodlighting component and a photo detector may be contained in the block which has an optical passage hole in a front face without using a tubed part.

[0017]

[Effect of the Invention] In a photosensor according to claim 1 to 8, since the protection-from-light section is prepared between the floodlighting section of front covering, and a light sensing portion, even if it is the case where waterdrop etc. adheres to the front face of front covering, the light from the floodlighting section to a light sensing portion is interrupted, and malfunction can be prevented temporarily. Since the light which is going to reflect in the waterdrop adhering to the light which passes the waterdrop adhering to front covering, and front covering, is going to carry out plural reflection of the front covering, and is going to carry out ON light to a photo detector is especially intercepted directly in the photosensor of claim 2 and three publications, it is certain. And since the protection-from-light nature matter which constitutes the protection-from-light section becomes depressed and is held inside, the immobilization is easy for it and there are few failures, such as exfoliation, while in use. Since the protection-from-light section is constituted by setting to a photosensor according to claim 4 to 8, and sticking or forming the low protection-from-light nature matter of a reflection factor in the front face of front covering, while being able to cover the light which leaks through the waterdrop adhering to front covering in the direct protection-from-light section, multiple-times reflection of the interior of front covering is carried out, and the leaking light is made to absorb in the protection-from-light section, and is attenuated.

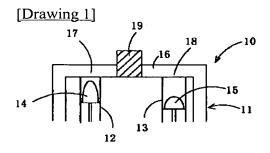
[Translation done.]

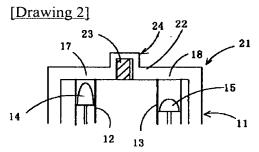
* NOTICES *

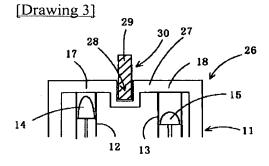
JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

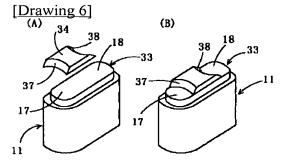
- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

DRAWINGS

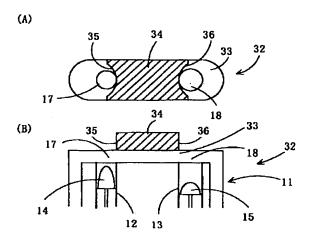


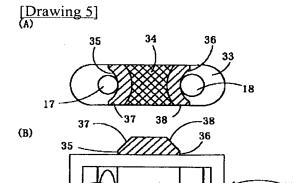


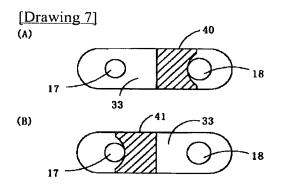




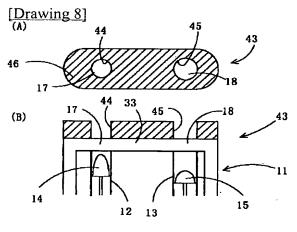
[Drawing 4]



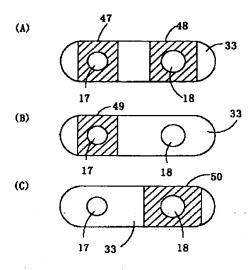


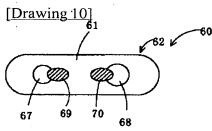


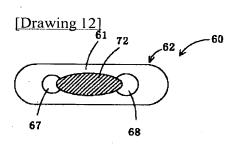
12 13

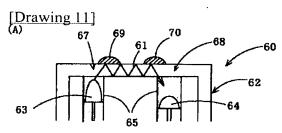


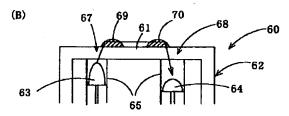
[Drawing 9]



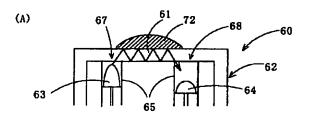


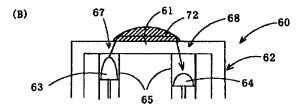






[Drawing 13]





[Translation done.]

(19)日本国特許庁 (JP)

(n)公開特許公報 (A)

(11)特許出願公開番号 特開2000-227359

(P2000-227359A)

(43)公開日 平成12年8月15日(2000.8.15)

(51) Int. CI. 7

識別記号

F I

テーマコード (参考)

G01J 1/02

E03C 1/05

G01J 1/02 E03C 1/05 P 2D060

2G065

審査請求 未請求 請求項の数8 OI (全7頁)

(21)出願番号

特顯平11-27892

(22)出願日

平成11年2月4日(1999.2.4)

(71)出顧人 000010087

東陶機器株式会社

福岡県北九州市小倉北区中島2丁目1番1

号

(72) 発明者 青柳 賢一

福岡県北九州市小倉北区中島2丁目1番1

号 東陶機器株式会社内

(72)発明者 本田 忠洋

福岡県北九州市小倉北区中島2丁目1番1

号 東陶機器株式会社内

(74)代理人 100090697

弁理士 中前 富士男

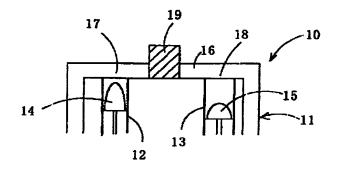
最終頁に続く

(54) 【発明の名称】光センサー

(57) 【要約】

【課題】 光センサーの表力バーに水滴等が付着して も、誤動作が発生する光の経路を遮断して、誤動作の生 じない光センサーを提供する。

【解決手段】 対となる投光索子14と受光索子15 を、前側に光透過性物質からなる表力パー16を備えた ケース11内に並設した反射型の光センサー10におい て、投光素子14からの光が通過する表カパー16の投 光部17と、受光素子15への光が通過する表カパー1 6の受光部18との間に、該表カパー16の表面より検 知方向に突出させた遮光部19を備えた。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 対となる投光素子と受光素子を、前側に 光透過性物質からなる表力パーを備えたケース内に並設 した反射型の光センサーにおいて、前記投光素子からの 光が通過する前記表力パーの投光部と、前記受光素子へ の光が通過する前記表力パーの受光部との間に、該表力 パーの表面より検知方向に突出させた遮光部を備えたこ とを特徴とする光センサー。

【請求項2】 請求項1記載の光センサーにおいて、前 記遮光部は、前記投光部と受光部との間の前記表カバー 10 を投光方向に突出させてその内部に遮光性物質を埋め込 んで構成されていることを特徴とする光センサー。

【請求項3】 請求項1記載の光センサーにおいて、前記選光部は、前記投光部と受光部との間の前記表カバーを投光方向とは逆方向に突出させて鑷みを形成し、該窪み内に遮光性物質を埋め込み固定して構成されていることを特徴とする光センサー。

【請求項4】 請求項1記載の光センサーにおいて、前 記遮光部は、前記投光部と受光部との間に貼着された反 射率の低い遮光性物質からなることを特徴とする光セン 20 サー。

【請求項5】 請求項4記載の光センサーにおいて、前記遮光性物質は板状となって、前記投光部及び受光部側の断面角度が鋭角となっていることを特徴とする光センサー。

【請求項6】 対となる投光素子と受光素子を、前側に 光透過性物質からなる表カバーを備えたケース内に並設 した反射型の光センサーにおいて、前記投光素子から照 射される光が通過する透光孔と前記受光素子への入射光 が通過する透光孔との双方を備えた反射率の低い遮光性 30 物質からなる遮光部を前記表カバーの前面に設けたこと を特徴とする光センサー。

【請求項7】 対となる投光素子と受光索子を、前側に 光透過性物質からなる表カバーを備えたケース内に並設 した反射型の光センサーにおいて、前記投光案子からの 光が通過する前記表カバーの投光部にのみ、又は前配受 光素子への光が通過する前記表カバーの受光部にのみ、 透光孔を備えた反射率の低い遮光性物質からなる遮光部 を設けたことを特徴とする光センサー。

【請求項8】 請求項6又は7記載の光センサーにおい 40 て、前記透光孔の径はそれぞれ対応する前記投光案子又は受光素子の径より僅かに大きいことを特徴とする光センサー。

【発明の詳細な説明】

[0001]

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、例えば、台所や洗面所等で使用される自動水栓等に使用される光センサーに係り、特に、水滴等が付着した場合でも、誤動作を生じにくい光センサーに関する。

[0002]

【従来の技術】従来の自動水栓においては、スパウトの 先部に反射型の光センサーが設けられ、また、この光セ ンサーに差し出された手を検知して吐水するもの、例え ば、この光センサーに手を翳したときに吐水し、再度手 を翳したときに止水するものが用いられている。この光 センサー60の概略構造を、図10~図13に示すが、 正面が光透過性物質からなる表力パー61を備えたケー ス62内の投光素子63及び受光素子64を表カバー6 1の方向に向けて配置し、投光素子63からの光が受光 素子64へ直接伝搬するのを防止するため、投光素子6 3及び受光素子64の何れか一方又は双方に遮光性物質 からなる筒状物65内に配置している。また、特開平8 -93015号公報には、内部に通水管を有するスパウ トケースの内部に、反射型の光センサーを備えた自動水 栓のセンサー設置構造が提案されている。このセンサー 設置構造においては、所定方向を向けて配置された投光 素子と受光素子とを簡状部に収納し、この筒状部の周囲 を黒色発泡体で包み、表面カバーの裏面側に黒色両面テ ープを配置して、投光索子から光が直接受光索子に入光 するのを防止すると共に、表力パーからの反射光を防止

している。 【0003】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】しかしながら、図1 0、図11に示すように、表カバー61の表面の投光部 67及び受光部68のそれぞれの内側部分に水滴69、 70が付着した場合、光センサー60が誤動作をする場合があった。即ち、図11(A)においては、投光案子 63からの光が表カバー61に付着した水滴69の付着 面に反射した後、表カバー61内を複数回反射し、更に 水滴70の付着面で反射した後、受光素子64に届いて 光センサー60がオンとなっていた。また、図11

(B) においては、投光素子63からの光は、投光部6 7を通過した後水滴69内に入り、その反射光が水滴7 0に届いて、再度水滴70内で特定方向に反射して受光 素子64に入光して、光センサー60がオンとなってい た。また、図12、図13に示すように、投光部67及 び受光部68を跨がる大きな水滴72が付着した場合、 図13(A)に示すように、水滴72の付着面と表カバ -61とを多重反射した光によって、又は図13(B) に示すように、水流72内を通過する光によって光セン サー60が誤動作をする場合があった。更には、特開平 8-93015号公報記載の自動水栓のセンサー設置構 造においても、表力パーの表面に、図11、図13に示 すような水滴が付着した場合には、投光素子からの光が 受光素子に伝わって、誤動作を防止できないという問題 があった。本発明はかかる事情に鑑みてなされたもの で、光センサーの表力パーに水滴等が付着しても、誤動 作が発生する光の経路を遮断して、誤動作の生じない光 センサーを提供することを目的とする。

50 [0004]

【課題を解決するための手段】前記目的に沿う第1の発 明に係る光センサーは、対となる投光素子と受光素子 を、前側に光透過性物質からなる表力パーを備えたケー ス内に並設した反射型の光センサーにおいて、前記投光 素子からの光が通過する前配表カバーの投光部と、前配 受光索子への光が通過する前記表カバーの受光部との間 に、該表カバーの表面より検知方向に突出させた遮光部 を備えている。これによって、仮に表カパーに水滴が付 着しても、表力パー内を通過する光及び表力パーに付着 した水滴を通過する光は、遮光部によって遮断されて、 受光索子に届かないことになる。ここで、前配遮光部と しては、例えば、前記投光部と受光部との間の前記表力 バーを投光方向に突出させてその内部に遮光性物質を埋 め込んで構成されているもの、前記投光部と受光部との 間の前記表力バーを投光方向とは逆方向に突出させて経 みを形成し、該窪み内に遮光性物質を埋め込み固定して 構成されているものや、前記投光部と受光部との間に貼 着された反射率の低い遮光性物質からなるものがある。 なお、遮光部を投光部と受光部との間に貼着された反射 率の低い遮光性物質とした場合には、この遮光性物質を 20 板状とし、更に、この板状の遮光性物質は、投光部及び 受光部側の断面角度が鋭角となっているのを採用するの が好ましく、これによって、板状の遮光性物質と表カバ ーとの間にゴミ等が溜まりにくいという利点がある。

【0005】また、前記目的に沿う第2の発明に係る光 センサーは、対となる投光素子と受光素子を、前側に光 透過性物質からなる表力パーを備えたケース内に並設し た反射型の光センサーにおいて、前記投光素子から照射 される光が通過する透光孔と前記受光素子への入射光が 通過する透光孔との双方を備えた反射率の低い遮光性物 30 質からなる遮光部を前記表力パーの前面に設けている。 そして、前記目的に沿う第3の発明に係る光センサー は、対となる投光案子と受光素子を、前側に光透過性物 質からなる表力パーを備えたケース内に並設した反射型 の光センサーにおいて、前記投光素子からの光が通過す る前記表力パーの投光部に符合する位置にのみ、又は前 記受光索子への光が通過する前記表力パーの受光部に符 合する位置にのみ、透光孔を備えた反射率の低い遮光性 物質からなる遮光部を設けている。第2、第3の発明に おいては、投光部からの光が水滴を介して受光部方向に 40 行かないように、遮光性物質からなる遮光部でシールド していると共に、表カバーの投光部内を反射する光を反 射率の低い遮光部を表カバーに貼着して防止している。 なお、第2、第3の発明に係る光センサーにおいて、前 記透光孔の径はそれぞれ対応する前記投光素子又は受光 素子の径より僅かに大きくすることによって、光センサ ーの機能を損なわないようにできる。

[0006]

【発明の実施の形態】続いて、添付した図面を参照しつ いる。これによって、表カバー22に水滴が付着して つ、本発明を具体化した実施の形態につき説明し、本発 50 も、投光素子14からの光が、付着した水滴又は表カバ

明の理解に供する。ここに、図1は本発明の第1の実施の形態に係る光センサーの部分断面図、図2は本発明の第2の実施の形態に係る光センサーの部分断面図、図3は本発明の第3の実施の形態に係る光センサーの部分断面図、図4(A)、(B)は本発明の第4の実施の形態に係る光センサーの説明図、図5(A)、(B)は第4の実施の形態に係る光センサーの変形例の説明図、図6(A)、(B)は同説明図、図7(A)、(B)は本発明の第4の実施の形態に係る光センサーの更なる変形例の説明図、図8(A)、(B)は本発明の第5の実施の形態に係る光センサーの更なる変形例の説明図、図8(A)、(B)は本発明の第5の実施の形態に係る光センサーの説明図、図9は(A)~(C)はその変形例を示す平面図である。

【0007】図1に示すように、本発明の第1の実施の 形態に係る光センサー10は、光透過性物質からなる合 成樹脂製のケース11内に、遮光性物質からなる筒状部 12、13が配置され、この筒状部12、13内にそれ ぞれ対となる投光素子14及び受光素子15が、前方向 を向いて配置されている。そして、ケース11の前側は 光透過性物質からなる表力パー16となって、投光素子 14の前面に投光部17が、受光素子15の前面に受光 部18が形成されている。投光部17と受光部18の中 間には、遮光部19が設けられている。この遮光部19 は遮光性物質である不透明の合成樹脂(場合によっては 金属、セラミック等) からなって、表カバー16内に基 部が埋め込まれ、その上端は表カバー16の表面から検 知方向に2~3mm突出している。この遮光部19の横 幅(図1における遮光部19の紙面と直交する長さ) は、表カバー16の横幅と同一であってもよいし、場合 によって、表カパー16の横幅より少し短くてもよい。 なお、投光素子14及び受光素子15には図示しない基 板が設けられて、それぞれのリード線と接続されて周知 の電気回路を形成している。

[0008] このような構成となった光センサー10においては、仮に表力パー16の表面に水滴が付着しても、水滴内に入光して反射する光及び付着した水滴に反射して表力パー16内を複数回反射する光は、遮光部19によって遮断されて、受光素子15に届かないことになり、結果として水滴による誤動作が防止できる。

[0009]続いて、図2に示す本発明の第2の実施の形態に係る光センサー21について説明するが、第1の実施の形態に係る光センサー10と同一の構成要素については、同一の符号を付してその詳しい説明を省略する(以降の実施の形態においても同様)。この光センサー21においては、ケース11の表カバー22の中央部分が投光方向に突出し、その内側の溝形窪み部分に遮光性物質23を配置して、遮光部24が形成されている。なお、遮光性物質23の高さは、表カバー22の投光部17及び受光部18の表面から2~3mmの高さとなっている。これによって、表カバー22に水流が付着して、サルキス14からの光が、付着した水流が付着して

20

一22内を複数回反射して受光素子15に届かないこと になる。この実施の形態においては、遮光性物質23が 表力パー22によって保護されるので、遮光性物質23 の材料の選定がより広くなるという利点を有する。

【0010】図3には、本発明の第3の実施の形態に係 る光センサー26を示すが、図に示すように表カパー2 7の中央部分を、投光方向とは逆方向に突出させて、表 面側に溝形窪み28が形成され、この溝形窪み28に板 状の遮光性物質29が装着され、遮光部30を形成して いる。この遮光性物質29の高さも表カパー27の高さ 10 から2~3mmの高さとなっている。このような構成に よって、光センサー26においても、仮に表力パー27 に水滴が付着しても、投光素子14から受光素子15に 水滴を介して入光する光を防止できる。

【0011】図4には、本発明の第4の実施の形態に係 る光センサー32を示すが、光センサー32において は、平面状となった表力パー33の表面で、投光部17 と受光部18と間に反射率の低い遮光性物質からなる遮 光部34を貼着している。ここで、反射率の低い遮光性 物質には、例えば、黒色顔料を混ぜた合成樹脂等、ゴ ム、黒色塗料を塗った合成樹脂、金属、セラミック等が あり、その高さは、表力バー33の表面から2~3mm 程度となっている。遮光部34の両端部は、投光部17 及び受光部18の形状に合わせて半円形状の切欠き3 5、36が形成されている。このような構成の光センサ -32によって、表カバー33の表面又は遮光部34の 表面に水滴が付着しても、水滴を通過する光は遮光部3 4で遮光される。一方、表力パー33の内部を反射して 投光案子14から受光案子15に入光しようとする光 は、表カバー33の表面に貼着されている反射率の低い 30 遮光性物質によって吸収される。ここで、表力パー33 の内部を反射する光の全部を遮断することはできない が、投光素子14から受光素子15に届く光は著しく減 衰するので、受光素子14の感度(即ち、閾値)を調整 することによって、非検知状態とすることが容易にでき る。

【0012】図5、図6に、この光センサー32の変形 例を示すが、遮光部34の両端部に形成されている半円 状の切欠き35、36を、その断面角度が鋭角(この実 施の形態では約45度)になるように斜面37、38が それぞれ形成されている。これによって、表力パー33 と遮光部34との接合部分を滑らかにし、その接合部分 にゴミや垢等が付着するのを防止し、仮に付着しても容 易に除去できるようにしている。なお、図6に示す変形 例では、ケース11の前面に設けられている表カパー3 3が、ケース11の前面側より少し小さく記載されてい る。なお、斜面の断面角度は20~70度の範囲で選定 するのが好ましく、断面角度が20度より小さい場合に は遮光部34の厚みを確保しにくくなり、70度より大 きい場合にはゴミが付着し易くなる。

[0013] 図7に、光センサー32の更なる変形例を 示すが、図7(A)においては、受光部18側に偏って 遮光部40を貼着した例を、図7(B)においては、投 光部17側に偏って遮光部41を貼着した例を示す。な お、遮光部40、41の材質及び厚みは、前記遮光部3 4と同一である。この場合も表カバー33の表面に水滴 が付着した場合には、水滴を通じて漏れる光は遮光部4 0、41で遮ることができる。一方、表カパー33内を 通過する光は若干増加することになるが、微小であるの で、受光素子15の感度調整を行うことによって解決で きる。

6

[0014] 図8(A)、(B) には本発明の第5の実 施の形態に係る光センサー43を示すが、表力パー33 の表面に、投光部17に軸心を合わせて符合する透光孔 44と、受光部18に軸心を合わせて符合する透光孔4 5を備えた板状の遮光部46を貼着している。この遮光 部46の材質は、前記遮光部34と同様、反射率の低い 遮光性物質(例えば、黒色顔料を混入した合成樹脂やゴ ム板等) からなっている。なお、正確には透光孔44の 内径は、投光素子14の直径の約1.1~1.5倍程度 と若干大きくなって投光索子14から発する光の視野を 妨げないようになっていると共に、透光孔45の内径 も、受光素子15の外径の約1 1~1 5倍程度と若 干大きくなって、受光素子15に入射する光を妨げない ようになっている。

【0015】これによって、表カバー33又は遮光部4 6の表面に水滴が付着しても、水滴を通じて投光素子1 4の光が受光素子15に入光することがなくなり、更に は、表力パー33内を複数反射して受光素子15に届く 光も著しく減衰する。これによって、光センサー43の 水滴等による誤動作を極力防止できる。図9(A)、

(B)、(C)は、この光センサー43の変形例を示す が、図9 (A) においては、反射率の低い遮光性物質を 投光部側と受光部側に2分割して、遮光部47、48と した例を、図9 (B) においては、反射率の低い遮光性 物質からなる遮光部49を投光部側にのみ配置した例 を、図9 (C) においては、反射率の低い遮光性物質か らなる遮光部50を受光部側にのみ配置した例を示す。 何れの場合も、水流付着によるこの遮光部47~50に よって投光素子14から受光索子15への光を防止でき る。

【0016】以上、本発明を複数の実施の形態に適用し た場合について説明したが、本発明は前記実施の形態に 限定されるものではない。例えば、実施の形態において は、ケース内において、投光素子と受光素子との直接干 渉を防ぐために、それぞれ遮光性物質からなる筒状部に 収納したが、筒状部を使用しないで、投光素子と受光素 子とを例えば、前面に光通過孔を有するブロック内に収 納してもよい。

[0017]50

20

【発明の効果】請求項1~8記載の光センサーにおいて は、表力バーの投光部と受光部との間に、遮光部を設け ているので、仮に、表カバーの表面に水滴等が付着した 場合であっても、投光部から受光部への光を遮り、誤動 作を防止できる。特に、請求項2、3記載の光センサー においては、表力パーに付着した水滴を通過する光及び 表力パーに付着した水滴に反射して表カパーを複数反射 して受光案子に入光しようとする光を直接的に遮断して いるので、確実である。そして、遮光部を構成する遮光 性物質は窪み内に保持されているので、その固定が容易 10 係る光センサーの変形例を示す平面図である。 であり、使用中に剥離等の障害が少ない。請求項4~8 記載の光センサーにおいては、表カバーの表面に反射率 の低い遮光性物質を貼着又は形成することによって遮光 部を構成しているので、表力パーに付着した水滴を通じ て漏れる光を直接遮光部で遮蔽することができると共 に、表力パーの内部を複数回反射して漏れる光を、遮光 部で吸収させて滅衰させている。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】本発明の第1の実施の形態に係る光センサーの 部分断面図である。

【図2】本発明の第2の実施の形態に係る光センサーの 部分断面図である。

【図3】本発明の第3の実施の形態に係る光センサーの 部分断面図である。

【図4】(A)、(B)は本発明の第4の実施の形態に

係る光センサーの説明図である。

【図5】(A)、(B)は第4の実施の形態に係る光セ ンサーの変形例の説明図である。

R

【図6】(A)、(B)は同説明図である。

【図7】(A)、(B)は本発明の第4の実施の形態に 係る光センサーの更なる変形例の説明図である。

【図8】(A)、(B)は本発明の第5の実施の形態に 係る光センサーの説明図である。

【図9】(A)~(C)はそれぞれ第5の実施の形態に

【図10】従来例に係る光センサーの平面図である。

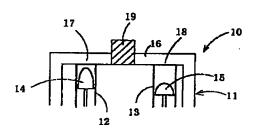
【図11】(A)、(B) はそれぞれ同断面図である。

【図12】従来例に係る光センサーの平面図である。

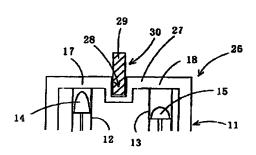
【図13】(A)、(B) はそれぞれ同断面図である。 【符号の説明】

10:光センサー、11:ケース、12:筒状部、1 3: 筒状部、14: 投光素子、15: 受光素子、16: 表カパー、17:投光部、18:受光部、19:遮光 部、21:光センサー、22:表力バー、23:遮光性 物質、24: 遮光部、26: 光センサー、27: 表カバ 一、28:溝形窪み、29:遮光性物質、30:遮光 部、32:光センサー、33:表カバー、34:遮光 部、35:切欠き、36:切欠き、37:斜面、38: 斜面、40:遮光部、41:遮光部、43:光センサ 一、44: 透光孔、45: 透光孔、46~50: 遮光部

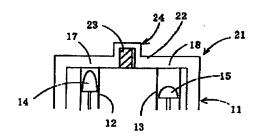
【図1】



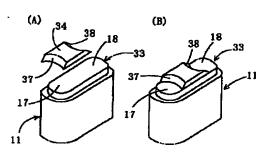
[図3]

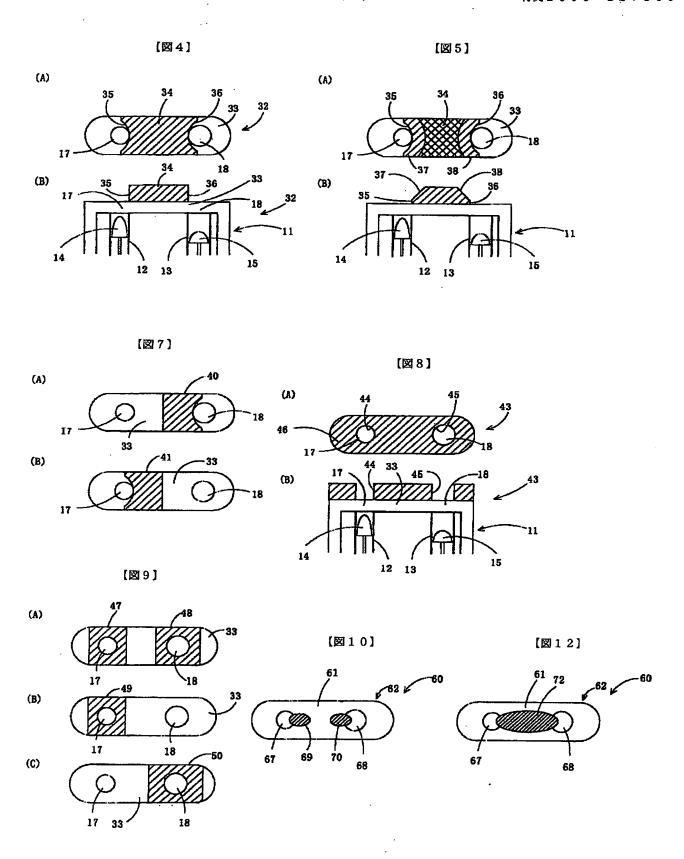


[図2]

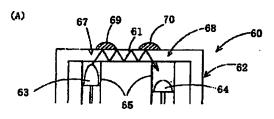


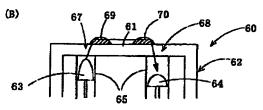
[図6]



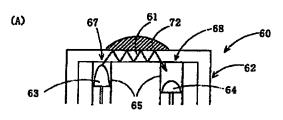


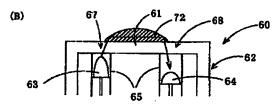
【図11】





[図13]





フロントページの続き

(72)発明者 中尾 仁 福岡県北九州市小倉北区中島2丁目1番1 号 東陶機器株式会社内

F 夕一ム(参考) 2D060 CA04 2G065 AA04 AB22 AB28 BA01 BB46 CA01 DA15